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And in those fitful pauses of the blast,
And in the tall dark spars that touch the sky,
What find I there!—that joy has speedier past,
Than all those winds, to lifelong misery.

O God, why wert thou God—to thus o'ergo
My soul in torture, like this sunshine sere?—
Away, I feel the cold March breezes blow,
And little waves are sparkling bright and clear.

THE IDEA OF THE VENUS.

BY H. K. JONES.

Venus is beauty, and her offspring is love. And there has been given beneath the sun no age in human history in which this goddess has not been adored. All generations have erected statues and temples in this worship, and she has been celebrated in their music, and poesy, and sculpture and painting—and by the praise and adoration of all human hearts.

This subject has therefore been the preferred and most fertile theme of art from the most ancient times.

Venus is beauty, and beauty has two most general orders—immortal and mortal, or spiritual and natural—or celestial and terrestrial—and accordingly in ancient mythologic science and art, of which we may assume the Greek wisdom to afford the purest type: there are two Venuses, the celestial and the terrestrial.

These are both the daughters of Jove. All beauty is of divine *paternity*. In the poetic myth, these are respectively the daughters of Jupiter and Harmonia, and of Jupiter and Dione. The one of supermundane, the other of mundane *maternity*. But universally and in philosophic myth, the Venus, in the soul's participation—love, is born of the foam or spray of the sea.

The idea of this philosophic myth is the key to the whole subject in its unity and universality. The sea is the symbol and representative of life, in that it is the deep that moveth from

within itself. It is inspired and quickened into movement by a visible goddess in the natural heavens, whose effigy and effulgence it bears in its bosom—the beautiful “*Selene*,”—unto whom it perpetually aspires and lifts itself up in universal tides of respiration, and pulses of waves, and it followeth her whithersoever she goeth. And out of these soul-motions, these respiring tides and pulsing waves, fanned by the breath of the heavens, issues forth the beautiful spray, a creature white and pure, and as beheld upon the expanses, a creature the very top and spirit of the aspiration of the waters—light, translucent, graceful, gay—skipping, hopping, dancing, joyful and instinct with life and the spirit of beauty. And this is the philosophic *image* of the Venus.

Let us now look for its *Idea*. And first, as nearest in order, the terrestrial Venus. The soul, in natural generation, is an abyss that moves from within itself. It also is inspired and quickened and determined by some vision of the beautiful—its heavenly—whose image in its own bosom and whose effulgence there, is the secret of the potency and rhythm of its respirations and pulses. This beautiful object, like the moon to the sea, is however but the reflection of the splendor of the true, and is not the absolute beauty. It, too, is a sublunary image. Yet unto this as its final good, in yearning and aspiration the soul ever lifteth itself, and followeth whithersoever this goddess leadeth. And out of this aspiration—the spray of the waters of the soul—ever springeth a spirit bright as the light, beautiful according to the image, joyful, graceful, leaping, skipping and dancing upon the waters of the soul—the queen, the crowned promiser, and bringer of all earthly bliss. She is Venus, with her ever attendant train of daughters—Thalia, Aglaia, and Euphrosune, youthful, ardent Desire, vivacious, bewitching Imagination, and exuberent, joyful Hope. All mortals tender their votive offerings at the shrine of this goddess—the terrestrial Venus, the effigy of the True. And of these votaries are they that “Have such seething brains, such shaping fantasies, that apprehend more than cool reason ever comprehends,” “That behold Helen’s beauty in a brow of Egypt.”

“A celebrated, royal fount I sing,
From foam begotten and of loves the spring ;
Those winged, deathless powers, whose general sway,
In different modes, all mortal tribes obey.”

Even mortal love is of divine paternity and plenitude, the daughters of Jove and Dione,

And yet the moon and all beneath her sway,
Are but reflections of the Fount of day.

Let us next distinguish between the reflection and the subject reflected, between the image and the subject imaged. And as in nature, so in spirit and mind, must we cognize other *forms* than those of mere terrestrial corporeality. Says St. Paul, "There are bodies celestial and there are bodies terrestrial," "and the glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another."

Terrestrial objects are not in themselves luminous, their lumen is a participation and reflection of a celestial body. And so the beautifulness of sensible forms is not of themselves, but participations and reflections of the celestial form, and the soul liberated from sense, possessed consciously of the vision of this celestial beauty, will of this contemplation experience that of which nature and sense are but symbols and prophesies. As the sea, the universal symbol, is lifted up in motion and aspiration unto its sensible image of beauty, so now, most eminently, is the soul that is quickened and alive in the true light of life, aspirant and enamored of the essential beauty. And the movement and the aspiration inspired and begotten of this beholding is love divine, love immortal. This fountain is the celestial *Venus*.

She giveth her votaries "beauty for ashes," and nourisheth the life with the ambrosia and the nectar, and her attendants, the graces, are youth, and beauty, and joy immortal.

Said Diotima, "To go, or be led by another correctly in the affairs of love is this: Beginning from the beautiful things, to keep ascending for the sake of the beautiful itself, by making use as it were of steps, from one beautiful object to many, and from the beauty of bodies to the beauty of souls, and from the beauty of souls to that of arts, and from the beauty of arts to that of disciplines, until at length from the disciplines he arrives at that single discipline which is the discipline of no other thing than of that *supreme beauty*, and thus finally attain to know what is the absolute beauty itself. Here is to be found, dear Socrates, if anywhere, the blessed life, the ultimate object of desire to man; it is to live in the contemplation of this *consummate beauty*.

"Whoever then has been instructed thus far in the mysteries of love, and has beheld in due order and correctly the things of beauty, he will when he arrives at the consummation, suddenly discover, bursting into view a beauty astonishing in its nature, that very beauty to the gaining a sight of which, all his previous labors have been undertaken. "What think you then," said she, "would take place, if it were in the power of any person to behold beauty itself, clear as the light, pure and unmixed, not polluted with human flesh and color, and much of other kinds of mortal trash, but be able to view the God-like beauty in its singleness of form? Think you," said she, "that the life of that man would be of little account who looks thither and beholds it with what devotion he ought, and is in company with it?"

"Perceive you not," said she, "that then alone will it be in the power of him who looks upon beauty itself with the eye by which it can be seen, to generate not the shadowy semblance of virtue, as not coming in contact with semblances, but true virtue as coming in contact with the substantial and the true? and to a person begetting true virtue and bringing her up, it will happen for him to become God-beloved, and, if ever man was, immortal."

"Thus, friend Phædrus, and ye the rest here," spoke Diotima, "and I am myself convinced, and being convinced, I am endeavoring to convince the rest, that no one would readily find a better assistant to human nature for the attainment of such a possession than love, and hence I assert that every man ought to hold love in honor, and I do myself pay all honor to the things of love, and cultivate them particularly, and exhort others likewise, and both now and ever I celebrate as far as I can, the power and the excellence of love."

Beauty generates love—terrestrial beauty, mortal love; spiritual beauty, celestial love; and this is the celestial Venus, the ideal Venus, the fabled goddess Venus, and yet not formed of gold, nor ivory, nor marble, but of the ideas and thoughts inspired by the muses; that divine form, which is the ultimate end and purpose of pure art, the typical form existing in the comprehension of the artist; in its terrestrial effigy representing the idea of the fairest earthly loveliness and beautifulness, and in its celestial type containing the idea of the celestial beauty and loveliness in its absolute sublimity. And thence does art endeavor to express the realization, at once, of the most beau-

tiful soul by means of the most beautiful body. She is a World-spirit, a divinity that shapes our ends.

“ Celestial Queen !
Expel base passions from the wandering soul,
And once more raise her to true beauty’s light,
Averting far the irritation dire,
And rage insane, of earth-begotten love.”

ANTONY AND CLEOPATRA.

BY D. J. SNIDER.

Rome had conquered the world. The stern spirit of the Republic could suffer no limitations; it was impelled by an irresistible impulse to reduce to its sway all the nations of the globe. Whatever was not Roman had no right to be; existence could only be purchased by submission to the Roman principle and by adoption of Roman institutions. The national spirit which gradually arose in the small hamlet along the banks of the Tiber was simply illimitable; hence it sought to sweep away the boundaries of nations, and could only be satisfied by the absorption of all other peoples. Assimilation was its strongest and most abiding principle, the world must become Roman. It is this colossal strength and intensity of nationality which gives to Rome her eternal charm and inspiration. But just here, too, we must look for the one-sidedness and imperfection of her deeds and character. Though the Romans, of all peoples that have ever existed, were the most intensely national, their whole career is, on the other hand, but one continued assault upon nationality; in the conquest of other countries they were logically destroying their own principle.

Hence when the world was subdued, republican Rome was no more; when she had obliterated the bounds of nationality, she had obliterated herself. The process is manifest; the conquered peoples which were incorporated into her life changed her character; the world absorbed Rome quite as much as Rome absorbed the world. Not captive Greece alone captured her conqueror, as